

Interracial News Service

A DIGEST OF TRENDS AND DEVELOPMENTS IN HUMAN RELATIONS

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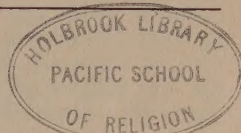
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REACTIONS

(following Supreme Court decision re integration in public schools)



District of Columbia

The Board of Education of Washington, D. C., has published its elementary and high school boundaries to become effective this fall in its public school integration plans.

According to the plan approximately 1,634 pupils will be transferred from fourteen Negro elementary schools to thirteen white schools in September; and about 640 students from five Negro junior high schools will go to three white schools.

Dr. Margaret Just Butcher, a member of the D. C. Board of Education is strongly opposed to the present D. C. Plan. She has referred to it is a "checker board scheme . . . actually solving only a problem of overcrowded schools."

Dr. Butcher maintains "The Plan is not in keeping with President Eisenhower's request that Washington schools accomplish integration in a manner to make it the democratic showcase of the world." (editorial, *St. Louis Argus*, July 9).

... George Washington University has formally announced its new policy banning racial segregation in all departments. In a letter sent to deans and directors of departments, the university president, Dr. Cloyd Heck Marvin, stated that methods of integrating students had been carefully considered by the membership.

After final action was taken, the following statement of policy was announced . . .

"In accordance with the George Washington University's long-established policy of seeking to meet the changing needs of the American community, it accepts as students, without regard to race, all who are able to profit by the educational service it extends, as made manifest by their meeting its admission requirements and maintaining its standards of scholarship." . . . (*Kansas City Call*, July 23).

Dr. Harold Haynes, assistant superintendent of schools for the District of Columbia, said that he will transfer two men teachers and one woman from the formerly all-Negro Division to McKinley High School in September.

McKinley, formerly all white, will get 460 Negro students. . . .

Integration this fall will be complete at the Washington School for Handicapped children where parents of both races petitioned for the merger of the separate schools.

The children will eat, sleep, and study together, and the faculty will be mixed. (*Chicago Defender*, July 24).

* * *

Missouri

The St. Joseph Board of Education, at a (recent) meeting, adopted the recommendation of Superintendent G. L. Blackwell calling for integration "wherever possible" in the local schools.

The two Negro elementary schools will remain open, however, and Negro teachers assigned to them. From the superintendent's report, it appears that Negro pupils do not have to go to the Negro schools but may enroll there if they choose. . . .

High school pupils will attend the high school nearest their homes. . . .

Superintendent Blackwell's report included a statement that it would not be possible to effect complete integration at this time, as facilities at some elementary schools would be "strained" if Negro pupils were admitted. (*Kansas City Call*, July 23).

Racial segregation will end next Feb. 1 in St. Louis high schools and in September 1955, in elementary schools under a plan announced . . . by the Board of Education.

The integration process is being started in compliance with the May 17 decision of the Supreme Court declaring that school segregation is unconstitutional. St. Louis has the second largest segregated school system in the nation. Baltimore has the largest. . . .

Teachers and non-teaching employees will remain in their present assignments "whenever possible," the board said.

The board also stated that teachers will be treated on an equal basis, without regard to race, and that their tenure rights will be preserved. The same policy will apply to lunchroom workers, matrons,

custodians and other non-teaching employees, the board said. . . .

The process will start this September with integration of Harris and Stowe Teachers Colleges, and special schools for handicapped children. Negroes previously have attended Stowe. Both student bodies will now attend classes at Harris. . . .

The second step, to take effect Feb. 1, at the beginning of the second semester of the school year, will see integration of the Negro and white high schools. The two technical high schools will not be integrated until the following September. (*New York Times*, June 27).

Integration in the Kirkwood School District will go into effect in September, affecting pupils through the sixth grade, according to a plan adopted by the school board . . . by a vote of 3 to 2.

Under the plan junior and senior high schools will be integrated by January, 1956, when a new senior high school is completed. . . .

Charles W. Diekreger and Lester W. Reinke, the two board members who voted against the proposal, said their opposition to the plan stemmed from the fact that they thought the entire system should be integrated at the same time. (*St. Louis Argus*, July 16).

Powell B. McHaney, president of the Board of Curators of the University of Missouri, announced to the press . . . that the University of Missouri has ended its policy of racial segregation. . . .

The action was taken, it was said, in conformity with the recent U. S. Supreme Court decision outlawing segregation in the public schools.

The board repealed a 1950 resolution based on the old court ruling approving separate but equal facilities.

"It seemed the only thing to be done in view of the Supreme Court decision," Mr. McHaney said.

"The members felt there was no need for waiting any further. The laws of the state that up to this time had prevented colored students from attending are no longer effective." . . .

In Springfield, Mo., the Board of Regents of Southwest Missouri State College voted . . . to abolish segregation in that school. . . . (*Afro-American*, July 24).

The matter in these pages is presented for the reader's information. Unless so stated, it is not to be construed as reflecting the attitudes or positions of the Department of Racial and Cultural Relations or of The National Council of Churches.

The Springfield Board of Education . . . adopted a resolution to abandon segregation in public schools. The policy will go into effect in September.

Pupils will be admitted to schools serving the district in which they reside.

The present Negro school, Lincoln School, will be operated during the next school year for any pupils desiring to attend. The resolution states any pupil may enroll at Lincoln this fall. . . .

Eleven of the 28 elementary schools are located in districts where Negro children of school age reside, and three of the four junior high schools also are in these areas. (*Kansas City Call*, August 6).

* * *

Kentucky & West Virginia

The Supreme Court's ruling that segregation in public schools is unconstitutional has produced varied reactions in this area. Kentucky's state board of education has advised local boards that since the Court has not specified how and when the decision is to be implemented, the schools will operate for the 1954-55 term in accordance with the state law requiring segregated instruction. West Virginia's superintendent of public schools has instructed local boards to work out their own problems. A few . . . counties have officially ended segregation, effective with the opening of school in September, but the majority of local boards are planning to continue segregation for the next term, with future action to be determined by the Supreme Court's final decree. The West Virginia Board of Education has opened the doors of the nine colleges it controls to qualified students of all races, effective immediately. West Virginia University, which has its own board of governors, is not affected by this step, but John G. Fox, state attorney general, has advised it to take similar action. (*Christian Century*, August 4).

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California

The United States Supreme Court's recent decision outlawing racial segregation in public schools is making itself felt in this Los Angeles suburb, far from the segregated South.

It has contributed to a decision by Pasadena school officials to hasten the abolition of a system of assignment of pupils to elementary schools that has been under attack as segregation in disguise.

The system involved an arrangement of "neutral zones" between various schools, in which residents' children could be arbitrarily assigned to a school other than the nearest one.

The "neutral zones" were introduced in 1927, supposedly to help school officials in equalizing school attendance. The permit arrangement, common to many school systems, was nominally only for extraordinary cases involving such problems as transportation and special tutelage. . . .

A school system spokesman said the "neutral zones" would be abolished, that the transfer permits now in force would be stringently reviewed and cancelled,

unless compelling circumstances were involved, and that a special three-member board would be created to handle the issuance of permits. (*New York Times*, June 27).

* * *

NEA

The National Education Association . . . adopted a resolution asking that segregation end in the nation's public schools. All but two states — South Carolina and Mississippi — voted in favor of the action and when the vote was taken every state in the Union was represented.

The segregation issue was a "hot" issue and the 20,000 teachers, college officials, superintendents and prominent educators attending the six-day NEA sessions, recognized it. . . .

The NEA had headquarters at Madison Square Garden and the South was well represented in the NEA's highest policy-making circles, thus belieing the rumor that the North held the whip. . . .

The president of NEA, for example, was Dr. William A. Early, superintendent of schools of Savannah, Ga. The president-elect, Miss Waurine Walker, is an educator from Austin, Texas. . . .

When the segregation resolution reached the floor it was seconded by the Maryland delegation. . . .

It was later pointed out that this was the first time in its 97-year history that the NEA had taken a stand on the issue of segregation in public schools. . . . (*Chicago Defender*, July 17).

* * *

Louisiana

Nine days after the U. S. Supreme Court decision of May 17 declaring compulsory racial segregation in public schools unconstitutional, the Louisiana Legislature passed a resolution calling for positive action to continue segregation in the State's schools.

The positive action was taken on July 7, when the Legislature passed House Bills 1136, 1137 and 1138. H. B. 1136 is an amendment to the State Constitution, to be submitted to the voters next November. It declares that segregation in public elementary and secondary schools of the State is imposed

. . . in the exercise of the State police power to promote and protect public health, morals, better education and the peace and good order in the State, and not because of race. The Legislature shall enact laws to enforce the State police power in this regard.

The other two are, respectively, a law (HB 1137) prescribing for Louisiana — "in the exercise of the police power of the State" etc. — a system of segregated schools and denying public funds to any public school violating the law; and another law (HB 1138) setting up the machinery for assuring the operation of the segregation system. Gov. Robert Kennon signed these measures shortly after their passage. The constitutional amendment is intended as a second line of defense in case the two new laws should

be declared unconstitutional. . . . (*America*, July 31, National Catholic Weekly Review).

* * *

Mississippi

Gov. Hugh White, disappointed over Negroes' rejection of "segregation by consent," says the Legislature will convene September 7 to consider abolishing public schools to preserve segregation in Mississippi.

In announcing the special session, White told the Legal Education Advisory Committee that until the last few days, he believed a certain element of Negroes would support separate but equal schools.

"I have come to the definite conclusion you couldn't put your faith and trust in them," he added.

"They're all just as wound up together as they could be. I have lost confidence."

The LEAC, which was created by the 1954 regular session to find a method to avoid the United States Supreme Court decision against segregation, endorsed a proposed constitutional amendment which the Legislature will consider.

Schools could be abolished on a state-wide or local basis. The LEAC said that if the public schools were abolished, there probably would be a system of private schools with state aid. . . .

Approximately half of Mississippi's population is composed of Negroes.

A majority of the 95 Negroes invited to a meeting with the LEAC by Gov. White, said they wanted no part of the voluntary segregation idea. (*Paterson* [N. J.] *Evening News*, August 9).

* * *

Virginia

General Assembly members from the Norfolk-Portsmouth area expressed surprise . . . at Governor Thomas B. Stanley's promise to seek legal means to continue segregated schools, but for the most part, were cautious in their comments.

The strongest attack on the governor's position came from Portsmouth delegate John A. MacKenzie, who declared:

"The proposition is not whether some people like segregation but whether we intend to circumvent a decision of the Supreme Court.

"I do not believe we should attempt to evade the final ruling of the Supreme Court which is scheduled for the fall. I will not give the governor any aid in such a program.

"I hope, and believe it will be wisest, that the Supreme Court will outline a program toward integration, perhaps taking five to ten years, which will allow our schools to merge without undue difficulty.

"I intend to send my children to public schools and hope that the Negro children will not be badly influenced by their presence."

But Senator Robert F. Baldwin, of Norfolk, endorsed the heart of the governor's statement by saying:

"It would be my inclination to lend my support to any sound legal method by which segregation on a whole or partial basis might be maintained." . . .

(Other delegates) declared they would rather withhold comment until final arguments were presented to the Supreme Court in the fall. . . .

All of the legislators apparently were stunned by the governor's reversal of his position, taken in May, that no final judgment should be made regarding the Supreme Court ruling until the best minds of both races had been brought together to study the matter. . . . (*Norfolk Virginian-Pilot*, June 27).

* * *

Georgia

Four church groups and the League of Women Voters of Georgia urged Attorney General Eugene Cook to reverse his position (to take no official part in the hearings) and represent Georgia in hearings before the U. S. Supreme Court (this) fall on how the Court should implement its decision outlawing segregation in public schools.

This was a new development as the Georgia Education Commission prepared to hold its first full-scale meeting . . . and hear from at least three gubernatorial candidates on how segregation might be maintained in Georgia schools. . . .

In two separate resolutions . . . the League of Women Voters of Georgia, the United Church Women of Atlanta and two committees of the United Church Women of Georgia, the Georgia Association of B'nai B'rith Lodges and the Christian Council of Atlanta urged Cook to attend the hearings. . . . (*Atlanta Constitution*, June 9).

* * *

Among Church Groups

Methodist Annual Conferences meeting since the United States Supreme Court ruling outlawing segregation in the nation's public schools have gone on record as indicating that the churches will make every effort to urge their members to conform to the adjustments which must be made to comply with the law.

Three all-white annual conferences and an interracial conference have taken favorable action concerning the Supreme Court's epoch-making ruling.

The Baltimore Conference ministers and lay delegates asked its 546 churches to study the possibilities of becoming interracial "wherever favorable opportunities present themselves." They also went on record as favoring admission of Negroes to the three conference-supported institutions: Western Maryland College, Westminster American University and Westminster Theological Seminary, and urged church members to cooperate "in good spirit" with the school authorities to end segregation in the public schools.

The Southwest Texas Conference voted to admit Negroes to all church-related schools in their area. The Genesee Conference (New York State) called for "an end of segregation in this generation in the Methodist Church."

The Minnesota Annual Conference . . . voted to make fellowship within the church inclusive of all races, . . . (*St. Louis Argus*, July 2).

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Representatives of the A. M. E. Church from every section of the country expressed their approval of the Supreme Court's decision outlawing segregation in public education in a resolution prepared by a special committee. . . .

The resolution (in part) is as follows:

Whereas, the Supreme Court of the United States in its recent decision outlawing segregation in the public schools has demonstrated to the world the determination to make American democracy real; and

Whereas, said decision by legal and peaceful methods has completely changed the bi-racial pattern of education in some parts of our nation which for years set apart Negro Americans as inferior and denied them equal educational opportunity; and

Whereas, every act of racial prejudice and segregation in and by America has been exploited by the forces of Godless Communism to strengthen its cause; and

Whereas, the United States because of this situation has been placed in an embarrassing position among the democratic nations of the world; and

Whereas, we regard this decision as vindicating the time honored position of the African Methodist Episcopal Church in proclaiming the absolute equality of all men before God; and

Whereas, for over 150 years our Zion has protested racial segregation in all areas of life and opened her doors to men of all races; and

Whereas, we regard this decision as the most significant one in the field of human relations since the Emancipation Proclamation; therefore

Be it resolved, that the officers and members of the Connectional Council of the AME Church now assembled commend the Supreme Court for this far-reaching decision and urge the support and cooperation of our entire constituency in its implementation. . . . (*Christian Recorder*, July 12, Official Organ of A.M.E. Zion Church).

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Amidst the rumor in some places that the churches might furnish facilities for state-sponsored segregated education, the New Orleans Council of Churches makes its position unmistakably clear. The Council passed a resolution approving the Supreme Court decision ending segregation in public schools. . . .

"We believe that this decision is consistent with the spirit and teachings of Jesus Christ, and we further affirm that this decision is in keeping with what has been through many years the official position of the Christian church, as it has understood the teaching and spirit of Jesus Christ.

"We acknowledge that racial segregation and discrimination still exist, but we

do affirm that great progress has been made and that slowly and surely the mind of the nation has been changing on this issue of equal rights and opportunities for all men. We humbly confess that we have not achieved what we believe to be God's will in this area of human relations. We face the critical adjustment between the absolute Christian ideal and the human level upon which a retarded and hesitating Christian conscience moves; Christian truth and strategy must reach us where we are and lead us by divine grace to where God would have us be. . . .

"We call upon the members of our State Legislature to find just ways of implementing in our state the decision of the U. S. Supreme Court. We ask that in every circumstance they exercise clear and calm judgment and Christian goodwill in all their attitudes and actions concerning this vital matter in accordance with the ideals of our Christian faith." . . . (editorial, *Central Christian Advocate*, August 1).

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Seven Atlanta ministers told members of the Christian Council of Atlanta . . . that the churches have an obligation to help carry out the Supreme Court ruling against segregation and that the churches must lead in the matter of integration of the races.

The ministers spoke on the basis of actions their several denominational bodies had taken regarding segregation. . . .

They spoke in a panel discussion on "What the Churches Have Said About Segregation." . . .

In general, the ministers agreed that the segregation pattern cannot be defended on the basis of Christian principles. . . . (*Atlanta Constitution*, June 13).

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Women church leaders from 15 southern states have pledged themselves to work for "a Christian society in which segregation is no longer a burden upon the human spirit."

In a statement . . . sent to governors and other officials of the 15 states, the women accepted . . . the recent Supreme Court decision outlawing segregation in public schools and called it an "opportunity of translating into reality Christian and democratic ideals."

They recognized, however, that this opportunity would bring with it a need for "patience, understanding and creative action" and expressed their desire to "build Christian emotional maturity" to meet the need.

The statement was adopted unanimously at a two-day regional meeting . . . June 21-22, . . .

The meeting was sponsored by the Department of Christian Social Relations of the General Department of United Church Women, National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. Miss Esther Stamats, director of the department, said it was the first meeting of this kind ever called. . . . (*National Council News Release*, June 23).

Two of the three Negro Roman Catholic schools in Nashville will be closed this fall, and all Catholic schools . . . in the adjacent communities of Donelson and Madison will be opened to Negroes. Chancellor Charles M. Williams of the Diocese of Nashville reports that a decision on whether integration will be practiced in other schools elsewhere in the state will be made later. The decision was announced during mass at the two Catholic churches with predominantly Negro communicants, Holy Family and St. Vincent de Paul. . . .

Catholic churches in the diocese have been open to worship by communicants of any race, and a few Negroes have been attending mass at some predominantly white churches. A few whites have been attending mass at the two Negro parishes. The decision to open the Catholic schools to both races was made at a meeting June 23, attended by Bishop William L. Adrian and pastors of the city. A directive, sent in letter form to the pastors, said it is preferred that Negroes who do not attend St. Vincent de Paul attend school in the parish in which they live. (*Christian Century*, July 12).

The old saying, "You can't tell on Sunday what a Christian will do on Monday," stood out like a bandaged sore thumb here as rebellious Presbyterian groups rejected the General Assembly's request to end segregation.

North Carolina Presbyterians set up a special committee to consider the continuation of segregation in church-supported schools. . . .

Resolutions sponsored by churches in Henderson, Burgaw and Maxton requested the state Synod to continue segregation in schools.

The resolution declared that the May request of the General Assembly to end segregation in schools, churches and the governing bodies of various conferences was not for the best interest of the church.

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, U. S. (Southern) passed a resolution asking for the abolition of segregation.

The assembly called on the trustees to open the doors to everyone regardless of race, and it recommended the same action to the Synods and Presbyteries.

Local Churches were urged to examine their own lives and practice no discrimination within their fellowship or outreach.

Since the assembly is not empowered to direct, but only to urge the adoption of the changes set forth in the resolution, it had the effect of leaving the matter to the discretion of each church group. (*Pittsburgh Courier*, July 31).

In a series of resolutions, the Convocation of Christian Colleges, meeting at Granville, Ohio in June, called for:

. . . An end to segregation — welcoming the Supreme Court decision and recommending "to all our colleges and

universities that they, in understanding and Christian love, admit students, appoint faculty members, and employ other college personnel without regard to race." (*NEWS, National Council of Churches*, June 29).

HOUSING

Moving in compliance with the recent U. S. Supreme Court edict, two of the nation's big cities, San Francisco and Baltimore, have abolished segregation in housing projects previously reserved for white families.

It is significant that in both cities the end of segregation in low-rent public housing is being brought into effect without known incident.

In noting the completion of a month's operation under the new policy, John W. Beard, secretary-director of the San Francisco Housing Authority, said Negroes have moved into all but one of the city's seven housing projects.

Although the Baltimore Housing Authority has officially abolished segregation in its thirteen low-rent projects, Chairman G. Cheston Carey said several months will be needed before the change in policy can be put into effect.

Carey said steps will be taken immediately toward "eliminating the factor of race in the selection of eligible tenants." (*Pittsburgh Courier*, July 10).

The purchase of homes by Negroes in the Coronado section of Norfolk County (Va.), which from its inception has been reserved for white residents, has created an unfortunate situation which will require restraint on the part of both races if it is not to get out of hand. . . . (*Norfolk Ledger Dispatch*, August 6).

It appeared today that Coronado residents have no intention of stopping nightly caravans or street gatherings in spite of the fact that the Norfolk chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People is planning to send out letters asking that police intervene. . . .

For some weeks residents of the area have been gathering on the lawn in

groups of five and six and talking among themselves in voices loud enough to be "overheard" from morning until 10 and 11 o'clock at night. At nightfall each day, cars have been patrolling from one end of the community to the other. . . .

The trouble in the community began sometime ago when a naval officer moved out and placed his home in the hands of a Negro real estate agent. Others moved out and also turned their homes over to the same agency. A civic league was formed in order to keep down panic and to keep the community together. . . .

. . . The Collette agency (which is handling the sale of homes to Negro clients) incidentally, has written a letter to Captain W. S. Powell of Norfolk County Police asking that vigilance and surveillance be maintained in the Coronado area "to prevent interference with the normal course of commerce."

It was reported . . . that no white real estate agencies will handle sales in Coronado and that finance companies in Norfolk have refused to help Negro clients. The NAACP president said that he had heard finance companies were refusing to help Negroes but that no specific incident had been found. . . . (*Norfolk Ledger Dispatch*, August 4).

A M A SCHOLARSHIPS

. . . the American Missionary Association of the Congregational Christian Churches . . . announced that it had granted scholarships for college education to eighteen young people of Indian, Latin American, Eskimo and Aleut ancestry. . . .

. . . The American Missionary Association expects to assist throughout the college course in the case of those who do creditable work. . . .

Some two or three thousand dollars additional are likely to be available during the next few months to amplify this program. . . . (*News release from American Missionary Association*, July 22).

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